

Results
of
Online Survey
of
Business Partners

Findings of the Online Vital Records Study Committee July 19, 2002 Findings of the Business Partner Survey

2001 Wisconsin Act 16 authorized the Department of Health and Family Services to form a multi-disciplinary committee tasked with developing guidelines for a comprehensive online vital records system. The recommended guidelines must incorporate the basic principles of a safe and effective vital records system: privacy, flexibility and productivity.

In order to incorporate the needs of their business partners in the guidelines, the Online Vital Records Study Committee developed and conducted a month-long survey of local registrars and vital records partners (record preparers, record filers and data users) to assess their current level of access to the Internet and use of hardware and software. The survey also gathered important information on existing record processing methods, the technology currently used to process vital records-related documents and suggestions for automating and simplifying procedures and reducing duplicative efforts.

Registers of Deeds, County Clerks, Clerks of Court, Coroners and Medical Examiners, funeral directors, hospital staff and the two City Health Vital Records Registration Offices were invited to participate in the survey, which was available both as a paper survey and on the Internet. The Vital Records Online Study Committee is grateful to the Wisconsin Registers of Deeds, County Clerks, Clerks of Court and Coroners/Medical Examiners associations and to the Wisconsin Funeral Directors and Wisconsin Funeral Services Alliance associations for their assistance in announcing and disseminating the survey.

Of the 898 agencies that were sent surveys, 287, or 32 percent responded.

Overview of the Survey Findings

Section I – Release of Vital Records Information

- Fewer than one-half of the agencies are required to provide information from vital records or related forms to the public or to other agencies. Over 80 percent of County Clerks and Registers of Deeds reported that they are required to provide this information to the public, compared to 14 percent of hospitals. Funeral directors are not required to provide information to the public. (Question 1)
- More than one-half of the Registers of Deeds (69 percent), Coroners (60 percent), and County Clerks (56 percent) reported that they are required to provide Vital Records information to other agencies. Over one-third of Clerks of Court (37 percent) and hospitals (36 percent), and 22 percent of funeral homes reported this requirement. (Question 2)
- There were several different types of agencies to whom the vital records information was provided. Twenty-five percent of County Clerks reported that they are required to provide information to law enforcement agencies, as are 17 percent of coroners. Twenty-four percent of Registers of Deeds reported that they are required to provide information to county

agencies, primarily local health departments; 17 percent of clerks of court reported that they are required to provide information to county agencies, primarily child support agencies, and 16 percent of hospitals reported that they are required to provide information to county agencies, primarily Register of Deeds. (Question 3)

Section II – Current Use of Information Technology

- Most of the agencies (87 percent) reported that they use a Windows operating system. Four percent reported using a different operating system such as DOS or OS2, 3 percent reported no system, and 6 percent did not know or did not answer. Agencies least likely to use Windows are Clerks of Court (71 percent) and hospitals (76 percent.) (Question 4)
- Most of the agencies (93 percent) reported that they have access to the Internet. Thirty-nine percent reported a fast internet connection such as a T1/T3 line, 14 percent reported a medium speed internet connection such as DSL or cable, 22 percent reported a slow connection via modem, and 25 percent did not answer or reported a connection of unknown speed. (Questions 5 and 6)
- Forty-five percent of the agencies reported that they use an electronic system to perform their vital records business. More than one-half of the funeral homes (57 percent), County Clerks (56 percent), and Registers of Deeds (51 percent) use an electronic system, in contrast to only 11 percent of the County Clerks. (Question 7)
- Thirty-five percent of the County Clerks reported that they use an electronic system to fill out pre-printed forms. Twenty-five percent of the hospitals reported that they use an electronic system to electronically submit data to another system, and 19 percent of the hospitals reported using an electronic system to create reports or data summaries. (Question 8)
- Sixteen percent of agencies reported that they developed their electronic system in-house, and 23 percent reported that they use a vendor for development. Sixty-one percent did not know or reported another method. At least one-third of the County Clerks (35%) and Registers of Deeds (33 percent) reported that they develop their electronic system in-house. Nearly one-half of the funeral homes (48 percent) reported that they use a vendor for development. (Question 9)
- 31 percent of agencies reported that they maintain their electronic system in-house. The highest percents were reported by County Clerks (54 percent) and Registers of Deeds (42 percent.) (Question 10)
- Only 11 percent of agencies reported that they electronically submit or transfer vital records data from one system to another. Most of these (27 of the 32 agencies that responded affirmatively) are hospitals. (Question 11)

Section III – User Needs

- Registers of Deeds (56 percent), Clerks of Court (49 percent), and hospitals (45 percent) reported that they would like the proposed system to create birth correction documents. Registers of Deeds also want to see correction documents for death records (40 percent) and marriage records (69 percent.) In addition, hospitals want the system to create fetal death documents (47 percent) and notices of removal (53 percent), and Clerks of Court want the system to create documents for court orders. (Questions 12 through 15)
- More than one-half of the respondents (62 percent) want the system to create standardized reports. The largest percent was for hospitals (75 percent) and the smallest was for funeral homes (50 percent.) (Question 16)
- Many respondents wanted the system to provide basic resource materials. City/Village/Township listings were mentioned by 89 percent of funeral homes and 82 percent of hospitals. Lists of coroner/M.E. reportable deaths were mentioned by 80 percent of funeral homes and 73 percent of coroners. (Question 17)
- Seventy percent of the reporting agencies want the system to allow communication between the data submitter and the filing agency. (Question 18)

Section I

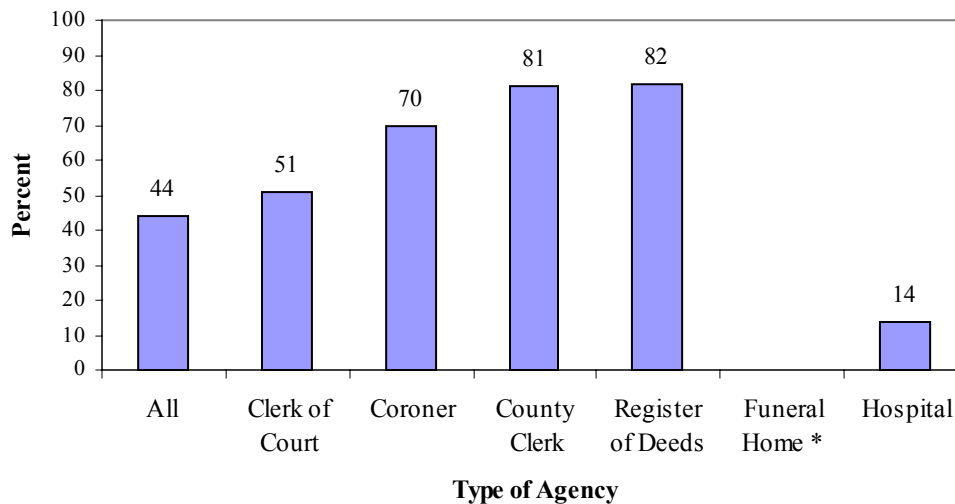
Release of Vital Records Information

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 1: Are you legally required to provide information from vital records or related forms to the public?

Type of Agency	Total	Responses					
		Yes		No		No Answer	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	287	127	44%	102	36%	58	20%
Clerk of Court	35	18	51%	17	49%	-	-
Coroner	30	21	70%	5	17%	4	13%
County Clerk	48	39	81%	8	17%	1	2%
Register of Deeds	45	37	82%	6	13%	2	4%
Funeral Home *	46	-	-	46	100%	-	-
Hospital	83	12	14%	66	80%	5	6%

Percent of Respondents that are Required to Provide Information to the Public



* Funeral Homes are not legally required to provide information from vital records to the public.

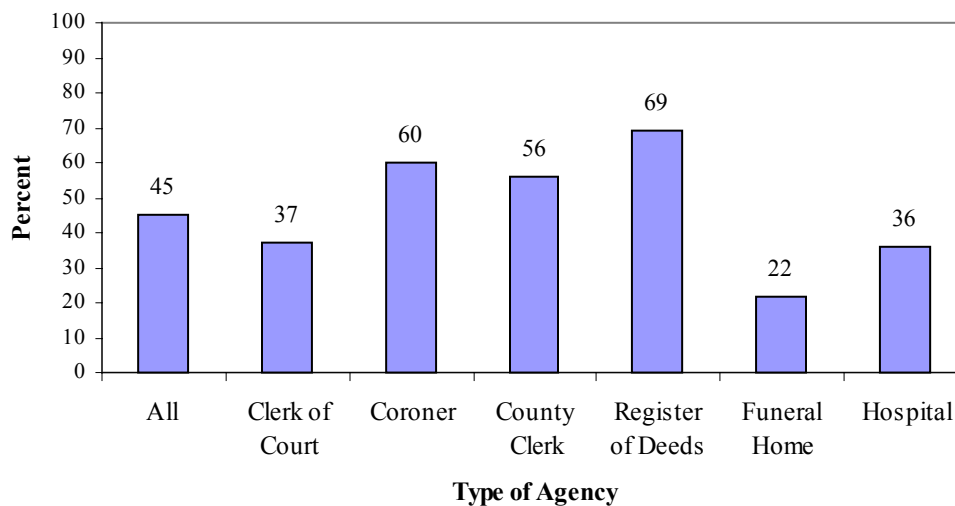
Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 2: Are you legally required to provide information from vital records or related forms to other agencies?

Type of Agency	Total	Responses					
		Yes		No		No Answer	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	287	129	45%	141	49%	17	6%
Clerk of Court	35	13	37%	22	63%	-	-
Coroner	30	18	60%	8	27%	4	13%
County Clerk	48	27	56%	17	35%	4	8%
Register of Deeds	45	31	69%	12	27%	2	4%
Funeral Home	46	10	22%	32	70%	4	9%
Hospital	83	30	36%	50	60%	3	4%

Percent of Respondents that are Required to Provide Information to Other Agencies



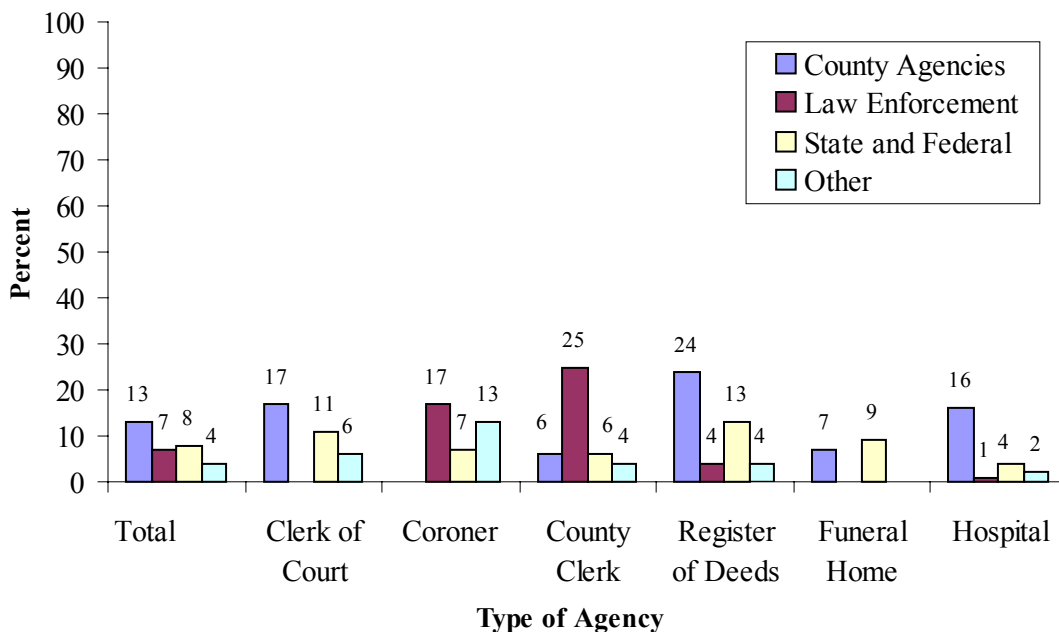
Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 3: What agencies receive the information?

Type of Agency	Total	Agencies							
		County Agencies		Law Enforcement		State and Federal		Other	
		Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
Total	287	36	13%	20	7%	22	8%	12	4%
Clerk of Court	35	6	17%	-	-	4	11%	2	6%
Coroner	30	-	-	5	17%	2	7%	4	13%
County Clerk	48	3	6%	12	25%	3	6%	2	4%
Register of Deeds	45	11	24%	2	4%	6	13%	2	4%
Funeral Home	46	3	7%	-	-	4	9%	-	-
Hospital	83	13	16%	1	1%	3	4%	2	2%

Agencies Receiving Information



Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

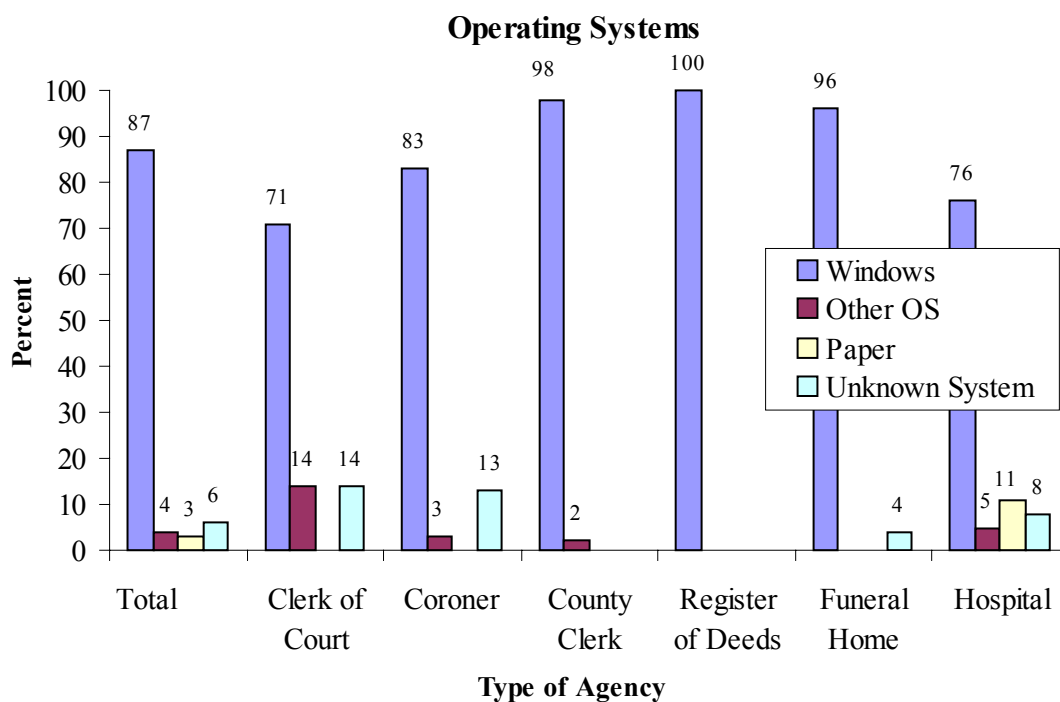
Section II

Current Use of Information Technology

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 4: What operating system do you use?

Type of Agency	Total	Operating Systems							
		Windows		Other OS		Paper		Unknown System	
		Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
Total	287	249	87%	11	4%	9	3%	18	6%
Clerk of Court	35	25	71%	5	14%	-	-	5	14%
Coroner	30	25	83%	1	3%	-	-	4	13%
County Clerk	48	47	98%	1	2%	-	-	-	-
Register of Deeds	45	45	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Funeral Home	46	44	96%	-	-	-	-	2	4%
Hospital	83	63	76%	4	5%	9	11%	7	8%



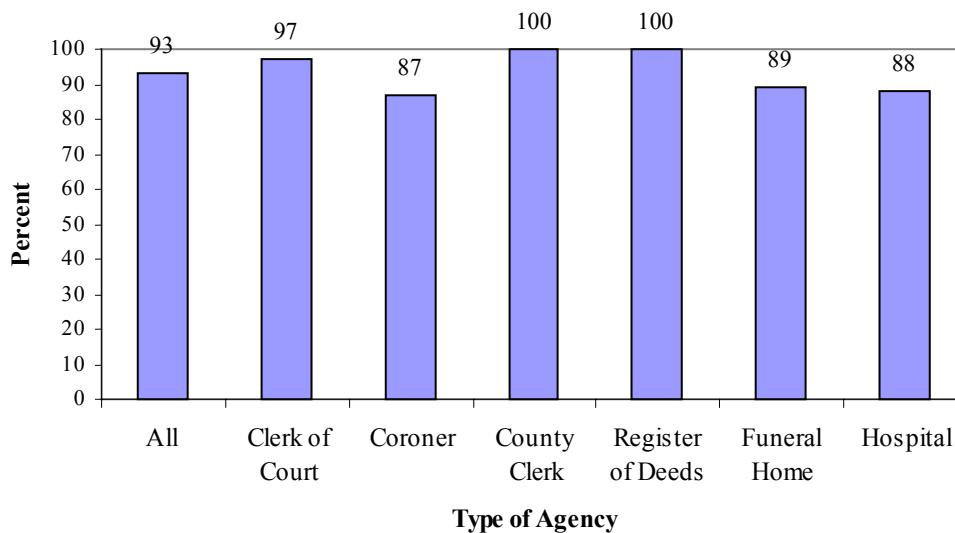
Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 5: While at work or during the course of your business, do you have access to the Internet?

Type of Agency	Total	Responses					
		Yes		No		No Answer	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	287	267	93%	17	6%	3	1%
Clerk of Court	35	34	97%	1	3%	-	-
Coroner	30	26	87%	4	13%	-	-
County Clerk	48	48	100%	-	-	-	-
Register of Deeds	45	45	100%	-	-	-	-
Funeral Home	46	41	89%	4	9%	1	2%
Hospital	83	73	88%	8	10%	2	2%

Percent of Respondents that Have Access to the Internet

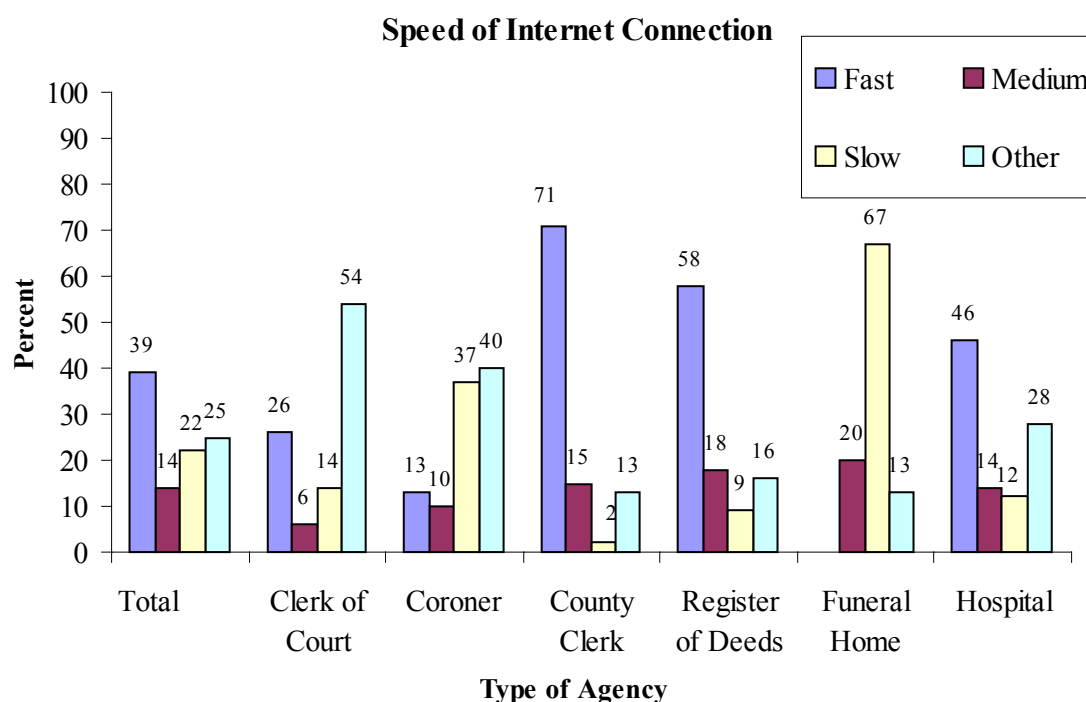


Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 6: What type of Internet connection do you have?

Type of Agency	Total	Internet Access							
		Fast		Medium		Slow		Other	
		Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
Total	287	111	39%	41	14%	62	22%	73	25%
Clerk of Court	35	9	26%	2	6%	5	14%	19	54%
Coroner	30	4	13%	3	10%	11	37%	12	40%
County Clerk	48	34	71%	7	15%	1	2%	6	13%
Register of Deeds	45	26	58%	8	18%	4	9%	7	16%
Funeral Home	46	-	-	9	20%	31	67%	6	13%
Hospital	83	38	46%	12	14%	10	12%	23	28%



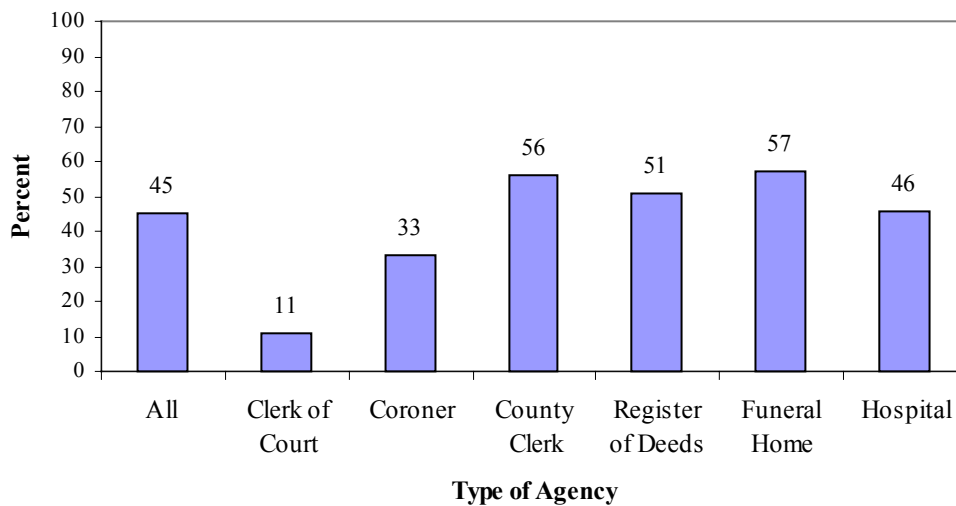
Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 7: Do you currently use an electronic system other than a FAX to perform your vital records business?

Type of Agency	Total	Responses					
		Yes		No		No Answer	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	287	128	45%	154	54%	5	2%
Clerk of Court	35	4	11%	31	89%	-	-
Coroner	30	10	33%	19	63%	1	3%
County Clerk	48	27	56%	21	44%	-	-
Register of Deeds	45	23	51%	22	49%	-	-
Funeral Home	46	26	57%	18	39%	2	4%
Hospital	83	38	46%	43	52%	2	2%

Percent of Respondents that Use an Electronic System to Perform their Vital Records Business



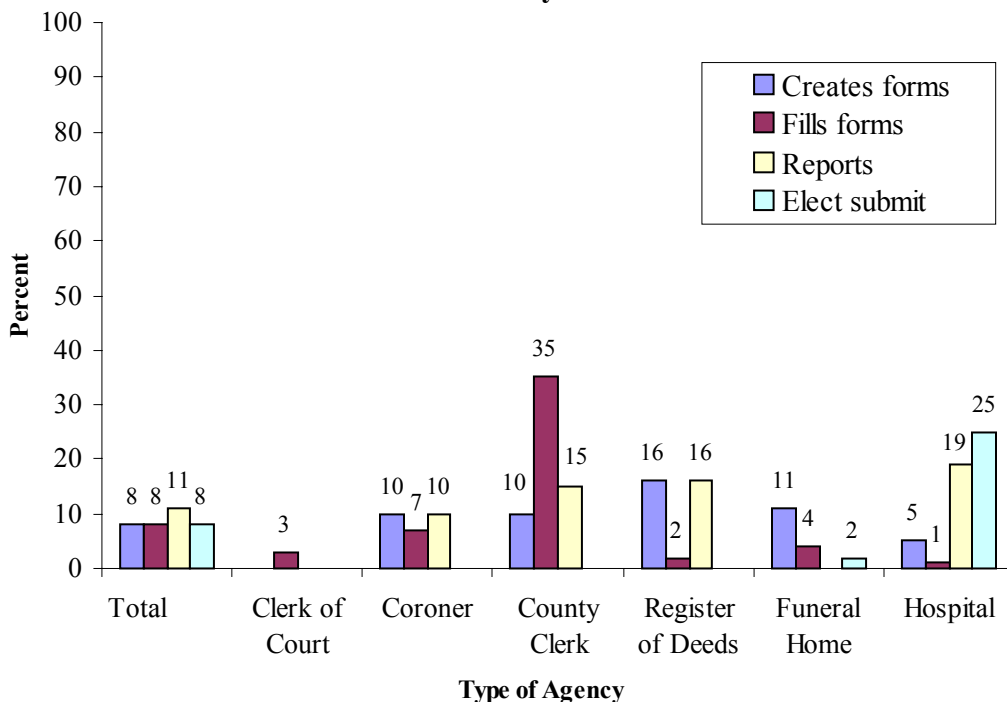
Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 8: What functions does the system perform?

Type of Agency	Total	Functions				
		Creates forms	Pre-printed forms	Reports	Electronic Submit	Other
Total	287	8%	8%	11%	8%	5%
Clerk of Court	35	-	3%	-	-	3%
Coroner	30	10%	7%	10%	-	7%
County Clerk	48	10%	35%	15%	-	-
Register of Deeds	45	16%	2%	16%	-	16%
Funeral Home	46	11%	4%	-	2%	2%
Hospital	83	5%	1%	19%	25%	4%

Functions the System Performs

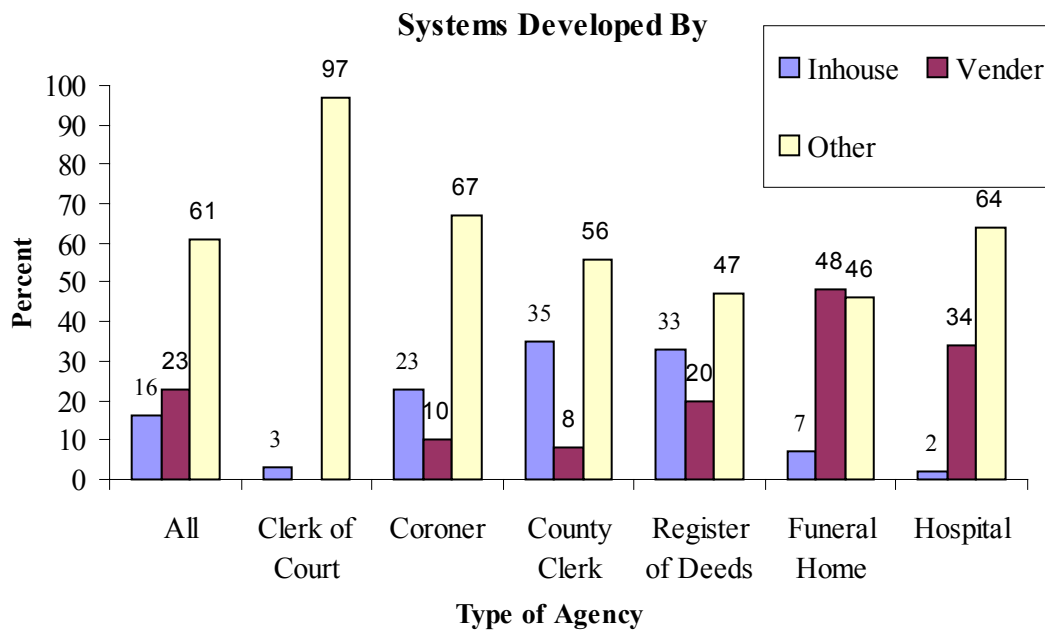


Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 9: Who developed the system?

Type of Agency	Total	Responses					
		Inhouse		Vender		Other	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	287	45	16%	66	23%	176	61%
Clerk of Court	35	1	3%	-	-	34	97%
Coroner	30	7	23%	3	10%	20	67%
County Clerk	48	17	35%	4	8%	27	56%
Register of Deeds	45	15	33%	9	20%	21	47%
Funeral Home	46	3	7%	22	48%	21	46%
Hospital	83	2	2%	28	34%	53	64%

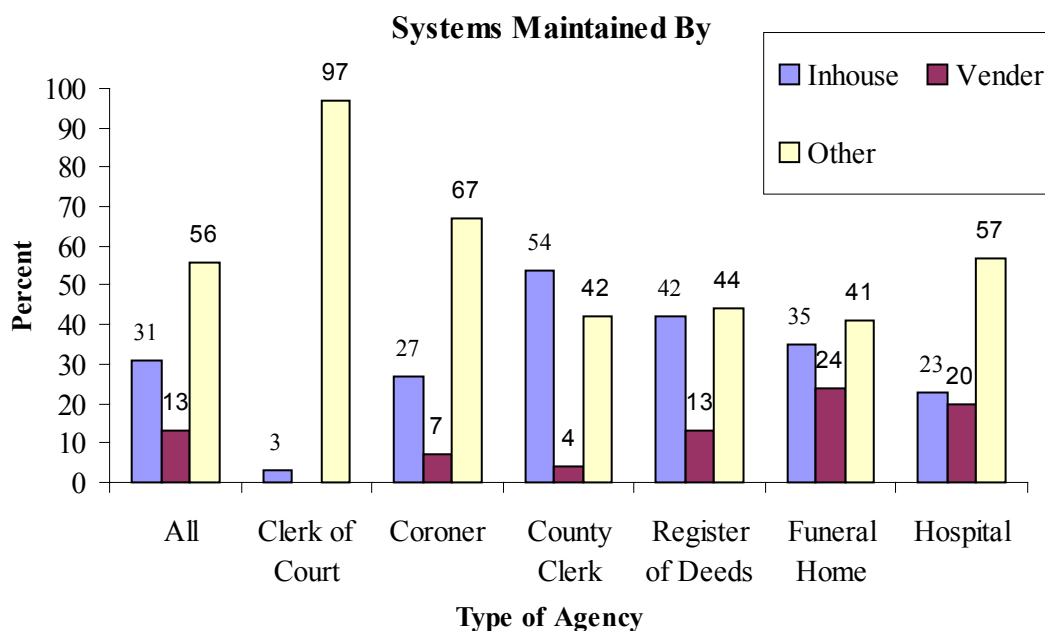


Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 10: Who maintains the system?

Type of Agency	Total	Responses					
		Inhouse		Vender		Other	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	287	89	31%	38	13%	160	56%
Clerk of Court	35	1	3%	-	-	34	97%
Coroner	30	8	27%	2	7%	20	67%
County Clerk	48	26	54%	2	4%	20	42%
Register of Deeds	45	19	42%	6	13%	20	44%
Funeral Home	46	16	35%	11	24%	19	41%
Hospital	83	19	23%	17	20%	47	57%



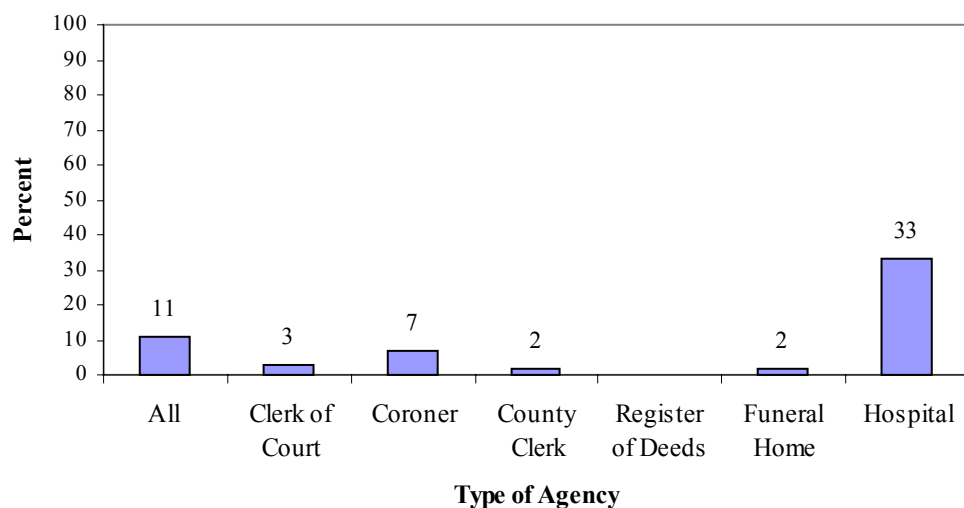
Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 11: Do you electronically submit or transfer vital records data from one system another?

Type of Agency	Total	Responses					
		Yes		No		No Answer	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	287	32	11%	240	84%	15	5%
Clerk of Court	35	1	3%	31	89%	3	9%
Coroner	30	2	7%	28	93%	-	-
County Clerk	48	1	2%	46	96%	1	2%
Register of Deeds	45	-	-	43	96%	2	4%
Funeral Home	46	1	2%	43	93%	2	4%
Hospital	83	27	33%	49	59%	7	8%

Percent of Respondents that Transfer Vital Records Data Electronically



Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

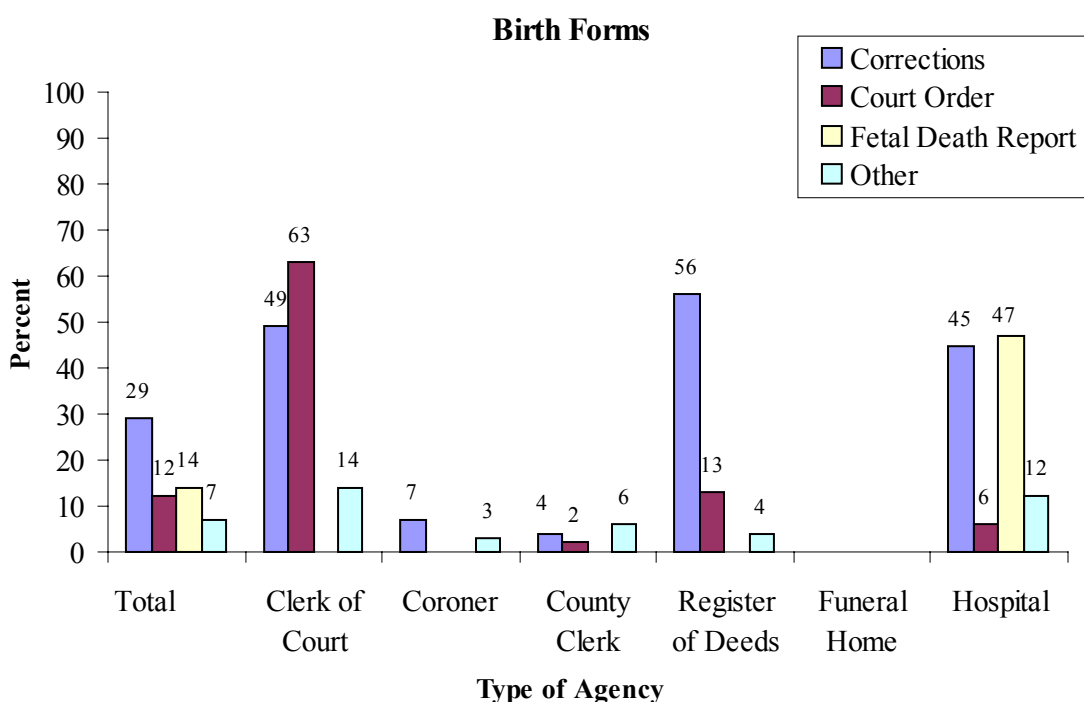
Section III

User Needs

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 12: What forms or documents would you like the system to create?

Type of Agency	Total	Birth Forms							
		Corrections		Court Order		Fetal Death Report		Other	
		Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
Total	287	83	29%	34	12%	39	14%	21	7%
Clerk of Court	35	17	49%	22	63%	-	-	5	14%
Coroner	30	2	7%	-	-	-	-	1	3%
County Clerk	48	2	4%	1	2%	-	-	3	6%
Register of Deeds	45	25	56%	6	13%	-	-	2	4%
Funeral Home	46	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hospital	83	37	45%	5	6%	39	47%	10	12%

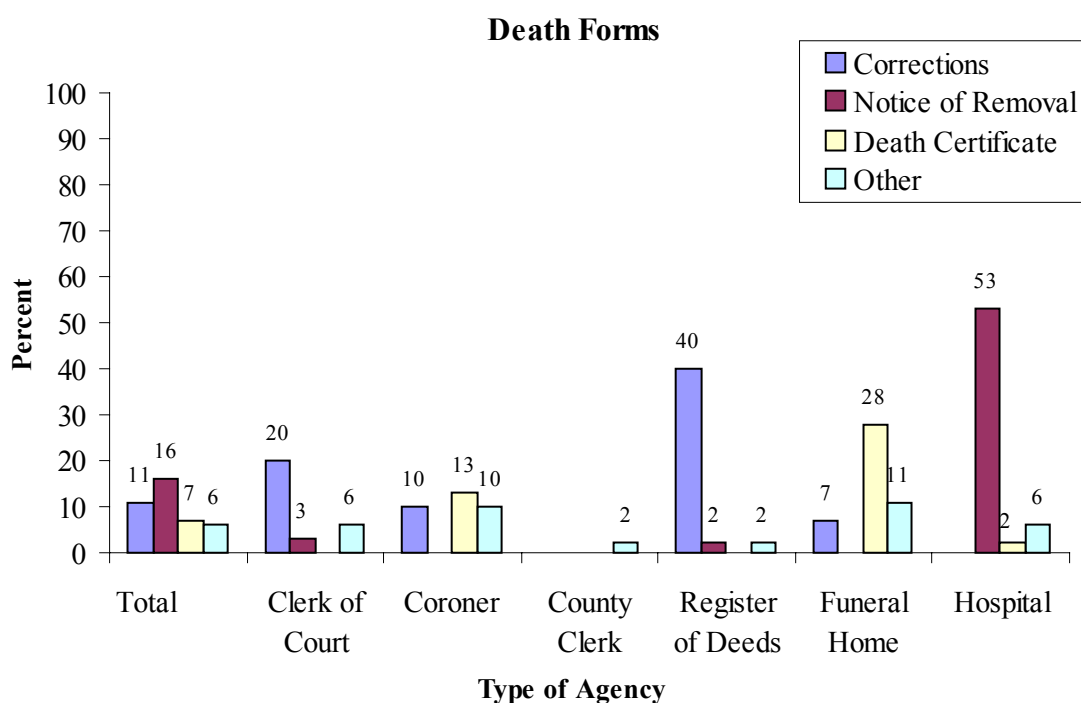


Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 13: What forms or documents would you like the system to create?

Type of Agency	Total	Death Forms							
		Corrections		Notice of Removal		Death Certificate		Other	
		Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
Total	287	31	11%	46	16%	19	7%	17	6%
Clerk of Court	35	7	20%	1	3%	-	-	2	6%
Coroner	30	3	10%	-	-	4	13%	3	10%
County Clerk	48	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2%
Register of Deeds	45	18	40%	1	2%	-	-	1	2%
Funeral Home	46	3	7%	-	-	13	28%	5	11%
Hospital	83	-	-	44	53%	2	2%	5	6%

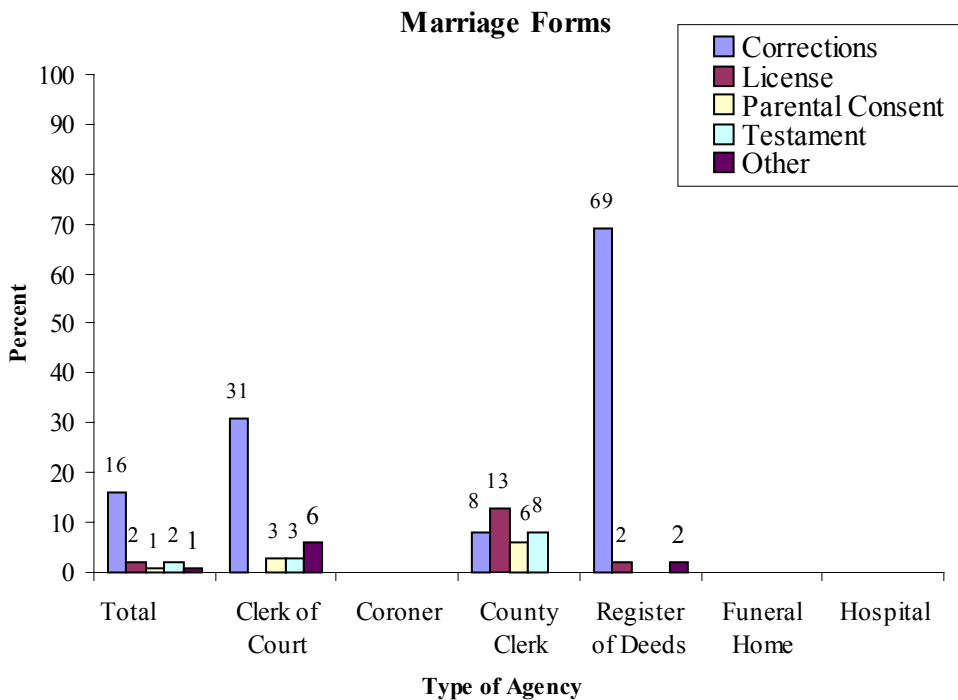


Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 14: What forms or documents would you like the system to create?

Type of Agency	Total	Marriage Forms									
		Correction		License		Parental Consent		Testament		Other	
		Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
Total	287	46	16%	7	2%	4	1%	5	2%	3	1%
Clerk of Court	35	11	31%	-	-	1	3%	1	3%	2	6%
Coroner	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
County Clerk	48	4	8%	6	13%	3	6%	4	8%	-	-
Register of Deeds	45	31	69%	1	2%	-	-	-	-	1	2%
Funeral Home	46	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hospital	83	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

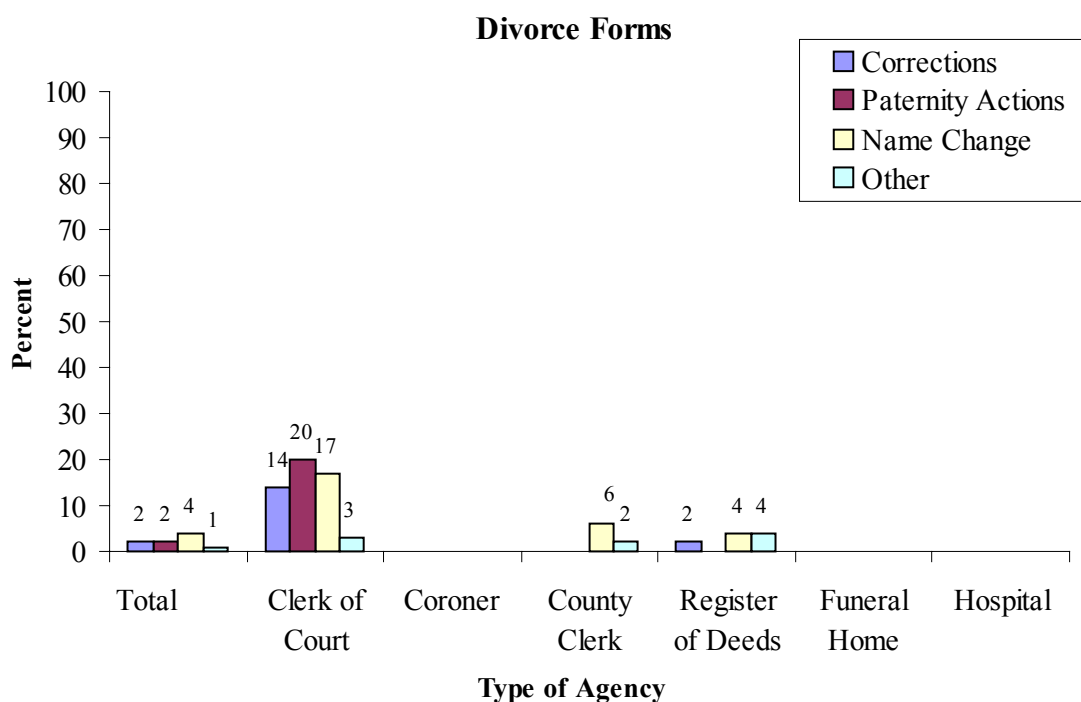


Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 15: What forms or documents would you like the system to create?

Type of Agency	Total	Divorce Forms							
		Corrections		Paternity Actions		Name Change		Other	
		Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.	Num.	Pct.
Total	287	6	2%	7	2%	11	4%	4	1%
Clerk of Court	35	5	14%	7	20%	6	17%	1	3%
Coroner	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
County Clerk	48	-	-	-	-	3	6%	1	2%
Register of Deeds	45	1	2%	-	-	2	4%	2	4%
Funeral Home	46	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hospital	83	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



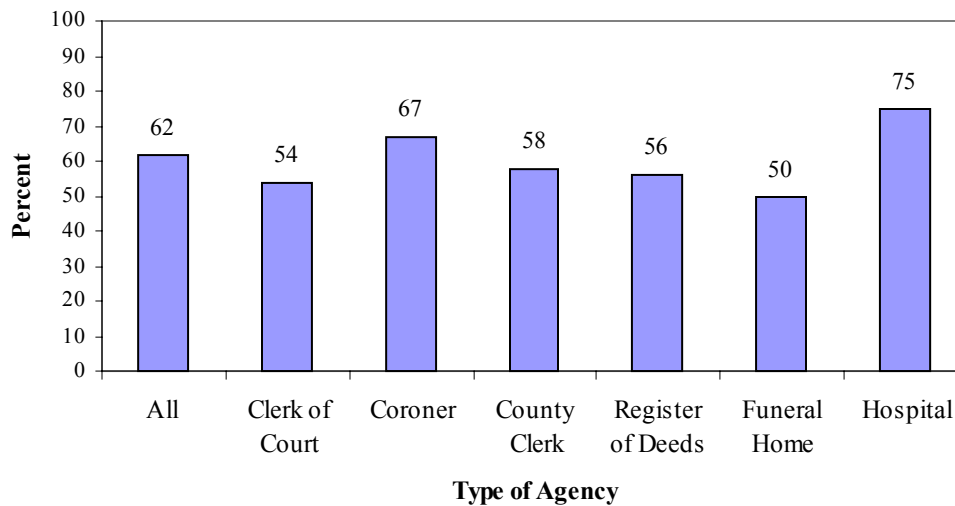
Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 16: Would you like the system to create standardized reports?

Type of Agency	Total	Responses					
		Yes		No		No Answer	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	287	177	62%	70	24%	40	14%
Clerk of Court	35	19	54%	8	23%	8	23%
Coroner	30	20	67%	4	13%	6	20%
County Clerk	48	28	58%	14	29%	6	13%
Register of Deeds	45	25	56%	13	29%	7	16%
Funeral Home	46	23	50%	18	39%	5	11%
Hospital	83	62	75%	13	16%	8	10%

Percent of Respondents that Would Like the System to Create Standardized Reports



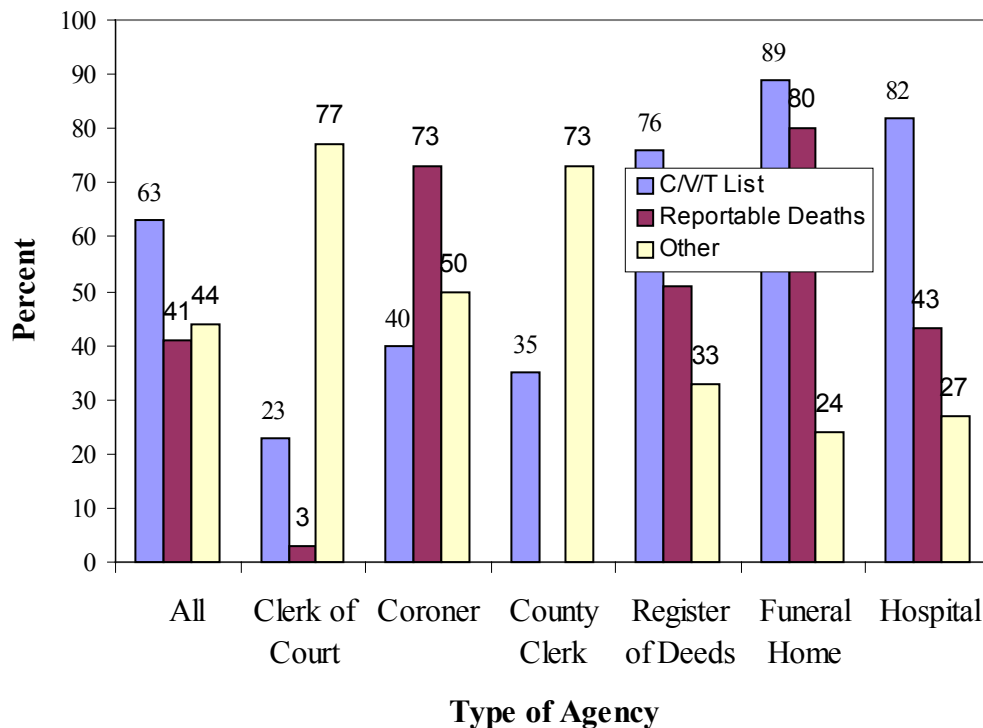
Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 17: What resource materials would you find helpful on the system?

Type of Agency	Total	Responses					
		City/ Village/ Township Listing		List of Coroner / M.E. Reportable Deaths		Other	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	287	180	63%	119	41%	125	44%
Clerk of Court	35	8	23%	1	3%	27	77%
Coroner	30	12	40%	22	73%	15	50%
County Clerk	48	17	35%	-	-	35	73%
Register of Deeds	45	34	76%	23	51%	15	33%
Funeral Home	46	41	89%	37	80%	11	24%
Hospital	83	68	82%	36	43%	22	27%

Resource Materials that Would Be Helpful on the System

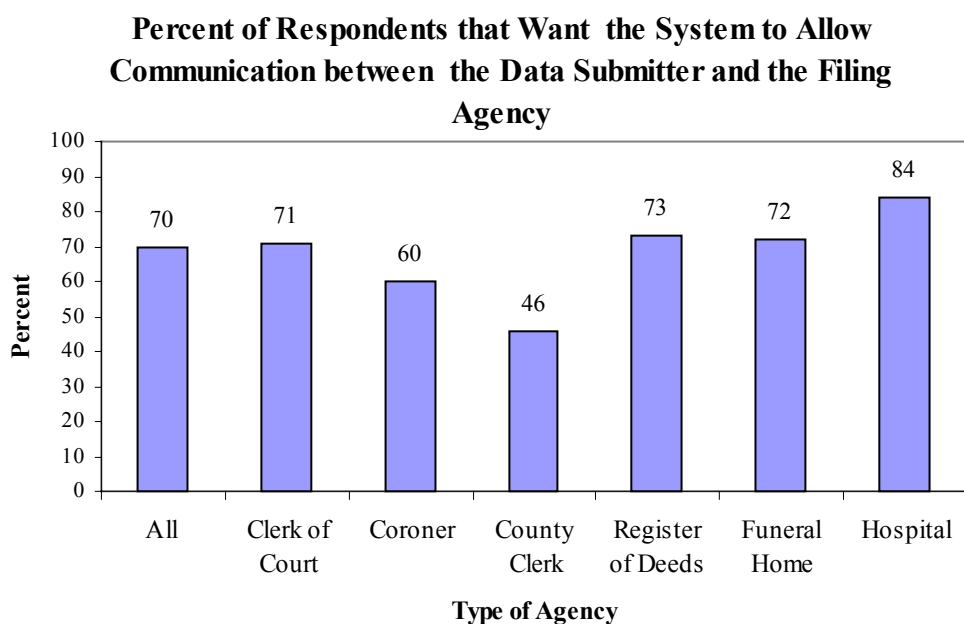


Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002

Report to the Vital Records Online Study Committee July 2002

Question 18: Should the system allow communication between you (as the data submitter) and the filing agency?

Type of Agency	Total	Responses					
		Yes		No		No Answer	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	287	201	70%	43	15%	43	15%
Clerk of Court	35	25	71%	3	9%	7	20%
Coroner	30	18	60%	6	20%	6	20%
County Clerk	48	22	46%	11	23%	15	31%
Register of Deeds	45	33	73%	7	16%	5	11%
Funeral Home	46	33	72%	9	20%	4	9%
Hospital	83	70	84%	7	8%	6	7%



Source: Vital Records Online Filing System Survey, 2002